

of languages in Australian universities has been such that the subject-names, "English", "French", "German", etc., normally mean "English Literature", "French Literature", "German Literature", etc. There is language study, in the sense that students are required to learn the language that they are going to speak and whose literature they are going to study, but the aims of the courses are not normally linguistic, and the courses are rarely the function of an underlying linguistic theory. It is not my present purpose to argue that this is wrong, but rather to draw attention to the apparent facts and to comment that the students understand what is meant by the subject-names, and expect things to be as they are. This orientation of the language subjects contains potential difficulties for the linguist. If he is serious about what he is doing, he will inevitably find himself wanting to introduce kinds of language study that are not traditional in language departments in Australia. To make matters worse, he is very frequently someone who did not start off as a linguist, and who is officially supposed to be something else. He is likely, therefore, to be doing something unaccustomed, not only as far as the department is concerned, but also as far as his own life and career are concerned. In the absence of any other linguists in the immediate vicinity, this can be a lonely experience.

If optional linguistics components of courses are introduced in such a department, the number of takers will initially be small. This can mean a lower work-load for the linguist than for his colleagues, in terms of marking, interviewing, etc. (though not usually in number of lecture-hours). They may (not unreasonably) feel some resentment about this, particularly if their own loads are heavy, and a demand may develop to make the linguistics strands compulsory, so as to distribute the load better. If the demand succeeds, further problems are immediately created, as students become the unwilling recipients of something they didn't join for.

Setting aside future acts of God, which might strike up departments fully-formed out of nowhere, it seems likely that many linguistics departments will struggle into the light because of what I have already called guerrilla activities. It is highly likely that departments that have this kind of birth will differ from each other according to their origins. In any subject-area, a certain diversity is normal: there will be some departments that are strongly oriented towards theory, and others that are more interested in applications; some that follow one school of thought, and some that follow others. But there is probably an extra dimension of diversity in linguistics because of its cross-disciplinary relationships.

and particularly because of the different directions from which departments can come. And surely no one will regret that.

NOTES

¹ *L.S.A. Bulletin* (Linguistic Society of America), No. 58, October 1973, p. 14.

² *L.S.A. Bulletin*, No. 56, March 1973, p. 34.

³ It is difficult to be certain of the facts because handbooks are not always explicit about arrangements for Ph.D.'s, and also because handbooks for a previous year are difficult to come across. Nevertheless, I believe the statement in the text is accurate.

⁴ These details are taken from the handbooks and calendars of the relevant universities. At the time of writing, only those for 1973 were available to me, and it could be that there will be changes in 1974 of which I am unaware.

SOME THOUGHTS ON DEPARTMENTAL STRUCTURE

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MOST Australian universities possess—and perpetuate—a structure with watertight departments. While co-operation exists between departments and between individuals in departments, the organisational framework for staff appointments, courses, graduate supervision and research tends to presuppose insularised departments. The unit system at a number of universities (e.g., Macquarie, Monash) has made undergraduate courses more flexible, but units too are generally departmentally-based. The maintenance of the present departmental system has almost become an end in itself.

Traditionally there are some departments which teach a discipline—a set of principles or methods on a theoretical framework (and its application), e.g., Linguistics, Literature, Sociology; and others which are multidisciplinary, e.g., German, Asian Studies, Education, Medieval Studies, in which several disciplines (such as Linguistics, Literature, Sociology, Visual Arts, Philosophy, Politics, applied to a particular context (area, period or objective) are taught. It is usually assumed—in university regulations, for instance—that each department represents one "discipline". Course sequences are based on this assumption and any sequences that happen to be discipline-oriented and cut across departmental boundaries are treated as exceptions. One university recently found it necessary to pass a special regulation deeming History and Ancient History (taught in different departments) one discipline—but for the purpose of one paragraph only! There are some disciplines which are taught in as many as eight departments in one university, and some topics recur in the courses of several departments, but there is little recognition of this fact.

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Being a linguist in a German Department,¹ I am very interested in more open departmental structures. A training in linguistics or in literary theory and criticism is transferable from one language to another, and this should be obvious from the degree awarded. My *discipline* is the same as that of linguists in, say, the Japanese and Russian Departments as well as the Linguistics Department. But the *context* which is the objective of my courses and of my research I share with my literary colleagues in the German Department. Being a Germanist and a linguist is therefore not mutually exclusive.

During my recent sabbatical leave I visited several European and American universities which have adopted different departmental structures. Some West German universities (e.g., Stuttgart, Konstanz) have "discipline-based" departments. They have, for instance, a Department of Linguistics and a Department of Literature, each with chairs of German, English and French. There is considerable co-operation between the two departments. In most states of West Germany, however, Staatsexamen² students in "discipline" departments are still examined in the "area" (e.g., German, not Linguistics and Literature) as Staatsexamen subjects for prospective teachers have to correspond to school subjects and on graduation, teachers have to teach traditional subjects.

Also—and this would be critical in Australia—the practical language work would be either separated from both linguistics and literature or split between them. (Practical language work in university foreign language courses is not taken very seriously in most European universities as it is assumed that students "should know the language anyway".) At Essex, students of foreign literatures are not required to take the relevant language beyond first year—not a very satisfactory situation. If practical language work is relegated to a Language Centre, this ought to form some unity with the relevant literature, linguistics and "civilisation" studies.

In the languages and literatures field, Weinrich and Isar drew up, in 1970, a model for a discipline-based school with appointments in a number of constituent fields.³ This has been implemented in several newer universities, most faithfully at Bielefeld, which has a Faculty of Linguistics and Literatures with provision for eight chairs of Linguistics and eight of Literature. Appointments are made according to areas of specialisation, e.g., theoretical linguistics, semantics, syntax, text theory, literary theory, aesthetics, method of teaching literature, comparative literature.

At Bremen, all students join a number of interdisciplinary projects in which they participate until graduation. These projects

combine academic and vocational treatments of the topic. There are no subjects or units, only interdisciplinary groups working on particular projects. Good work is carried out very enthusiastically in these projects, particularly as the topics are highly "relevant", but students often lack basic background in the appropriate discipline. This is not a major problem due to the very favourable staff-student ratio at present, facilitating personal supervision. But full-sized German universities have very unfavourable staff-student ratios. It would, I feel, be preferable to commence the projects at a later stage in the course but they are an idea worth adopting as they give students (and staff) experience in interdisciplinary teamwork.

I believe that both "discipline-based" and "context-based" departments have their place in the university but it must be recognised that they are different kinds of departments, with natural overlap well beyond the intersection of disciplines. I was therefore very impressed by the system of joint appointments operating in many U.S. universities. Staff is appointed according to qualifications and teaching and research interests. That is, someone can work in a "discipline" and a "context" department (e.g. German and General and Comparative Literature, French and Linguistics, Linguistics and African Studies) or in two closely related disciplines (e.g., Psychology and Linguistics, Philosophy and Literature). Resources for graduate supervision are pooled, and appropriate courses at the graduate and undergraduate levels are cross-listed by various departments. This also benefits staff and students in border fields (e.g. sociolinguistics, media, urban studies).

At most Australian universities, graduate supervision is department-, not interest-based, and postgraduates are not able to take fullest advantage of the facilities available. In an E.F.T.S. system, graduates should be assigned, in the first place, to a supervisor who is a specialist in the relevant field rather than to a department, with provision for joint supervision where necessary between experts in a discipline and in an area or a period.

Joint applications, cross-listings and less "insulated" departments would reduce duplication in courses and put facilities at the disposal of as many people as possible. This will foster greater teamwork. A good deal more team teaching and research could take place between faculties, especially between "purely academic" and "vocational" faculties, since many disciplines are shared by these. In many respects I am attracted by the concept of the *Gesamthochschule* which is becoming the general tertiary institution in West Germany. This comprises several tertiary bodies—e.g., a

university, an institute of technology, a teachers and some mono-faculty colleges—all within one administrative unit, either integrated or co-operating, sometimes on the same campus. It is proposed to restructure all existing tertiary institutions ultimately in West Germany in this way.

The first step is for us to recognise the present situation and institutionalise greater flexibility. If the changeover to a system making provision for departments with "general and comparative" interests and multidisciplinary "context" departments with certain objectives is gradual, there should be no administrative "headaches". In fact, they may help solve staffing problems. A relatively "under-worked" staff member in one department could offer an additional course for students of an understaffed department. Each staff member could still be based in one department but fractionally allocated also to some other department. In any case, some courses would be common to both departments.

It is gratifying to see that Australia's two newest universities are planning along these lines, but existing institutions would benefit from a similar structure. Though my remarks originate from languages and literatures fields, I feel they apply to many other disciplines. The increased "cross-fertilisation" between languages and social sciences advocated by W. Bostock in his contribution to this symposium would also be served by implementing the above suggestions.

NOTES

¹ Language departments at Monash offer students linguistic as well as literature streams. For instance, the German Department gives courses in German phonology, syntax, semantics, historical linguistics and sociolinguistics and languages in contact. There is also a Linguistics Department offering general linguistics courses (phonology, syntax, semantics, historical linguistics, sociolinguistics), linguistics of English, etc.

² Final tertiary examination which is an entrance examination for public service and certain professions (e.g., medicine, law, teaching).

³ See *Literatur in Studium und Schule, Loecumer Kolloquium 1* (Ev. Akademie), ed. O. Schwencke; Loecum, 1970; 168-82.

⁴ *The Boundary Around Languages*.

NOTES AND NEWS

ACADEMIC SALARIES

When Federation representatives (Professor C. P. Wendell-Smith, President; Mr. A. W. Anderson, Vice-President; Mr. G. W. F. Smith, Secretary, and Mr. P. C. Byers, Chairman of Salaries Committee) last saw the Minister for Education, the Hon. K. E. Beazley, at Parliament House, Canberra, on 15th February, 1974, he was optimistic that the permanent Academic Salaries Tribunal would be established and able to hear and determine the Federation's case for increased salaries before the end of the current financial year.

Should there be any unreasonable delay in setting up the permanent Tribunal, he agreed to consider making academic salary adjustments, on this occasion, by other means.

The Australian Cabinet subsequently approved of the establishment of an Academic Salaries Tribunal and the Minister issued on 4th April, 1974, the following press release:

Review Machinery for Academic Salaries

The Minister for Education, Mr. Kim Beazley, announced today the Australian Government would introduce legislation soon to set up permanent machinery to review academic salaries.

Mr. Beazley said the Government would seek to extend the functions of the Remuneration Tribunal to cover academic salaries.

"The Government has decided it would be appropriate to incorporate the legislation to establish the Tribunal within the framework of the Remuneration Tribunal Act," Mr. Beazley said.

"A separate part will be added to the Act providing for the appointment of the Tribunal with assessors."

Mr. Justice Campbell recommended last year when he was reviewing academic salaries that permanent review machinery should be set up.

Mr. Beazley said the Government would seek to extend the functions of universities and colleges of advanced education in the Territories.

It would also recommend to the Australian Government the rate of academic salaries to be taken into account in determining levels of financial assistance to tertiary institutions in the States.

Mr. Beazley said he favoured the review of academic salaries as soon as practicable.

He had already received representations from the Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee and Staff Associations.

Mr. Beazley said responsibility for the proposed legislation would rest with the Special Minister of State, Mr. Lionel Bowen, with whom he would be co-operating closely.